

Sermon Study Notes for August 5, 2018

“First Things First” Part 2 – Haggai 1:5-15

[Note: Reflection and discussion questions are indicated in italics]

V. 6 says, “You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.” *Why did the Pastor say people call this problem “the vacuum of the soul?” Have you ever experienced the kind of feelings this is describing?*

Millions of Americans earn piles of money but feel they never have _____. *The obvious question is, “are you one of them?” Or have you known others who had this malady?*

The thing that truly satisfies the human heart is the _____ of the living God. That’s what we were _____ for! *Do you believe it is really possible for fallen, sinful mortals to have genuine fellowship with the holy, infinite God of the universe? How?*

Read verses 7-11. *What did the Pastor say that God is really saying here? (“I want your _____.”) Do you think it is possible to give up many and great things for God in this life, and still not give Him what He really wants most?*

There are deserts that are _____ by the Lord, because in those circumstances, when our own strength and resources come to an end, all of a sudden we discover things in the nature of God, or in Jesus Christ, that we never would have _____, if left to ourselves. *Do you believe that a loving God would, and does put people into a “desert place” for their own good? Have you ever experienced this in your own spiritual journey? Talk about it.*

Don’t raise an _____ or an unholy fist to the Lord. He is all _____! Understand that it is normal to be “in the desert” once in a while. *What do you do if/when you experience thoughts or feelings of anger toward God? How do you think God responds?*

Because God loves them (Israel), God won’t let them _____ in the direction they are going. Even that comes in His love, because the Bible says, “Those whom the Lord _____ He chastens – He disciplines.” *Do you believe that many, or even most of the problems we face are self-induced?*

We’re all so used to going to the store and buying food...but how quickly – in a day, in a week, in a month – things could _____! *Do you see a “dwindling” in our land? Do you think this could be a gracious work of God to cause us to wake up, spiritually?*

V. 12 says, “Then Zerubbabel...Joshua...and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the Lord their God had sent him. And the people _____ the Lord.” *Do people in our nation generally fear the Lord today? What does that mean, to you? How much would you say that you fear God?*

Read verses 13-15. *How long did the Pastor say it has been, up to this point, since Haggai began speaking to the people?*

God said, “I am _____ you!” That should always be an astounding thing to us, and something that we never, ever _____ in the midst of our trials and tribulations. *Is this something that you find easy to forget? Does this fact comfort you in your trials?*

God said to Joshua, “Be strong and courageous, for you will bring the Israelites into the land I promised them on oath, and I Myself will be _____ you.” *Does the fact of God’s presence motivate you to serve the Lord? To obey the Lord? To be strong & courageous?*

Reflect on what the Pastor shared about Joshua’s experience, watching Moses throughout his life, and now preparing to enter the Promised Land. *Is God’s promise, “I will be with you” truly enough for you, in your situation today?*

When we face _____, and step into what lies beyond, nothing else matters except to know, “I will be with you. I will take you by My righteous right hand, and bring you to _____.” *What does this truth do for you in your heart and life? Is this something that you can and will share with others?*

We cry, “I need this, and I need that!” And God cries out from His throne, “NO! You need _____!” *Do you think most people understand what they really need in this life? Why or why not? What can and should the church be doing to help people with this?*

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